In central Italy, the 8th and 7th centuries BCE are often called an Orientalizing Period by scholars. Central Italian culture underwent dramatic changes during this time and such changes are often attributed to renewed contact with Greeks. Beginning in the first half of the 8th century BCE, Greeks established permanent settlements in southern Italy and Sicily. These settlements would have facilitated contact between Greeks and central Italians. Central Italian elites, confronted with Greek materials and practices, are thought to have adopted and adapted Greek materials and practices, in order to differentiate themselves form local non-elites. In this narrative, Greeks are the principal actors, transmitting material wealth and cultural practices to central Italian elites. In this presentation, I will argue that this was not the case. Rather, exchange between Greeks and Italians was limited in the 8th and 7th centuries BCE; it was not until the 6th century BCE that exchange became common. Secondly, I will show that central Italians of all statuses participated in this limited exchange. Lastly, I will discuss the broader implications of these conclusions and argue that widespread indigenous practices, mainly wine consumption, predated the arrival of Greeks in the western Mediterranean and created demand for banquetting materials. While central Italians supplied themselves with such materials throughout the 8th and 7th centuries, by the 6th century, Greeks began to participate in these exchanges and profited.

Kate is a PhD candidate in Classics and Archaeology at Stanford University. She received a BA from Tufts University. She is also the site director of the Poggio Civitate Archaeological Project, an Etruscan settlement dating to the 7th and 6th centuries BCE near Siena, Italy. Her research focuses on the archaeology of pre-Roman Italy.

Wednesday, April 29, 2015
12:00pm - Seminar Room

Location: Building 500
488 Escondido Mall
Room 106

If you have any questions regarding our events, please contact:

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